

CHAPTER 25

W A R N I N G

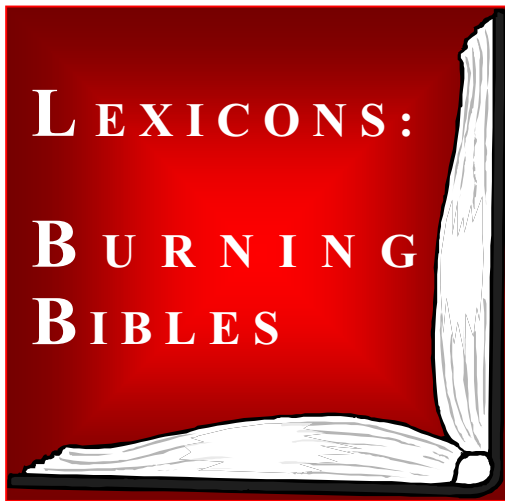
from

T R A N S L A T O R S

&

M A R T Y R S


1300s - 1568



W O R D B Y W O R D

“...slain for the word of God...” Rev. 6:9

The “furnace” which burned at the stake thousands of Christians and thousands upon thousands of Bibles sent its sparks flying in the face of “any part” of the Bible its critics could not bear. Hundreds upon hundreds were martyred for their belief that “every word” in their *English Bible* was *true* (Ps. 12:6, Prov. 30:5).

- ❖ **Ralph Allerton** was burned at the stake in 1557. Because he had no ink in prison, he — **wrote in his own blood** . With his blood he wrote a report of his trial and a letter of encouragement to a widow. Within his blood-filled pen, he pleaded,

“I believe the Scripture to be true, and in the defence of the same I intend to give my life, rather than I will deny any part thereof, God willing” (Foxe, vol. 8, p. 408).

- ❖ Many Christians have had to leave churches because, although the pastor preached the gospel, he wrongly thought he could improve upon the KJV in at least forty places. In 1556 **John Cavel** would not go to a church that ‘corrected’ the Bible one week and preached the true gospel the next; for this he was burned at the stake, along with five others. Foxe records Cavel’s reply to his inquisitor:

“John Cavel...answered, that the cause why he did forbear the coming to the church, was, that the parson there had preached two contrary doctrines. For first, in a sermon that

he made...he did exhort the people to believe the gospel; for it was the truth, and if they did not believe it, they should be damned. But in a second sermon, he preached that the **Testament was false in forty places**, which contrariety in him was a cause amongst others of his absention from the church” (Fexe, vol. 8, p. 106).

Burn the Bible word by word or be burned. To hide from the heat, **Nicholas Hereford**, helper to Wycliffe, was among some who “draw back” (Heb. 10:38). He joined the critics of the Bible to save his own life. A letter was found in the public registry of 1391, written to Hereford from a faithful Lollard. It reproved him for being like Peter, who chose the warmth of the ‘camp’ fire, instead of the lonely firing line (John 18:18). It also chided Hereford for “coloring” the text of the Bible as he was “expounding” it (Fexe vol. 3, p. 189). The Lollard’s letter said,

“Woe be unto *us* Scribes and Pharisees, which shut up the kingdom of heaven; that is to say, the true knowledge of the holy Scriptures before men, by our **false glosses*** [saying, ‘that word *actually* means...’] and crooked similitudes [‘the word should have been translated...’]” (Fexe, vol. 3, p. 188).

(*The OED describes a ‘gloss’ as an “explanation...Often used in a sinister sense...an interlinear translation [like Berry’s, Marshall’s, Kohlenberger’s or Green’s]...[T]he gloss indeed destroys the text...To veil with glosses, to explain away; to read a different sense into.” ‘Gloss’ is an old fashioned word which describes the *painting over* of one thing with another. Have you heard the expression ‘varnish the truth’? The gloss or varnish pretends to improve it, but sometimes veils it. To understand the use of the word *gloss*, examine a *glossy* magazine page and notice that the glossy finish reflects an image of the light from a window or lamp; this white spot *obscures* the words on the page. From the word ‘gloss,’ the word ‘glossary’ was formed. Fexe said, glosses appear “in the margin” and pretend to “expound” the meaning of a “word” but “all the world may see that to be a gloss of mere sophistry [a definition that is sound in appearance but tends to mislead]” (Fexe, vol. 5, p. 307).)

Did translator Nicholas Hereford proudly think that it was *he* and not *the words* of the Bible which were ‘inspired’? The same public record holds *another* letter which exposes the master-mind behind such so-called ‘exposition.’ The letter’s anonymous author writes (as C.S. Lewis did in *The Screwtape Letters*), exposing some of the tactics of the devil — in 1391.

“I, **Lucifer**, prince of darkness, and profound heaviness...:

To all our children of pride...

[W]e have poured our poison upon the earth, and therefore, fill yourselves full...

[P]repare ye vices cloaked under the similitude of virtues. Allege for yourselves the **glosses** [definitions] of the holy Scripture, and wrest them directly to serve your purpose...” (Foxe, vol. 3, pp. 190, 192).

The “children of pride” are still burning Bibles – word by word (Job 41:34). Those today who give the impression that the English Bible does not always give the “same sense” as the originals, are parroting “The Cruel Constitutions of Arundel” of 1409. In them Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel, forbade the preaching or possession of the word of God **in English**. His lying document said,

“It is a dangerous thing, as witnesseth blessed St. **JEROME**, to translate the text of the holy

Scripture out of the tongue into another; for in the translation **the same sense is not always easily kept...**" (Foxe, vol. 3, p. 245).

To phrase it another way, as the serpent would say, "Yea, hath God said?" (Gen. 3:1). Once the authority of the scriptures is questioned, the serpent offers *his* glossed interpretation of the facts and translation of the words.

The New **D**ark **A**ges

The Dark Ages raged (c. 500-1500) because Rome taught that the pages of scripture could only be understood by a 'language scholar' — who gauged a Bible word's meaning by reading it in the context of the writings of early 'church' philosophers (e.g. Origen, Clement, Cyprian, Cyril, Jerome) and secular philosophers (e.g. Plato, Aristotle). This can be seen in the 1500s during a debate over how "the Scriptures may be best understood." The Catholic speakers said the "**often reading** of the Scriptures, and never so painful **comparing of places**" should be abandoned.

"...for the **often reading** of them **doth not bring** the true **understanding** of them. What other thing is there then? Verily this is the ready way, not to follow our own heads and senses, but to give over our judgment unto the holy catholic church...[he goes on to cite] Cyprian...Augustine...Cyril...Vigilius...Fulgentius..." (Foxe, vol. 6, pp. 511-514).

Rome recommended, "giving over our judgment" to the writings of the "schoolmen." Again today, we are being drawn into a new Dark Age with 'language and lexicon studies,' using definitions in Strong's or Thayer's lexicons

which were generated from the writings of *the very men* (Cyprian, Augustine, Cyril, etc.) recommended by Rome in the old Dark Ages. The true method of Bible study, which is the frequent “reading” and “comparing of places” in the English Bible, was recommended by the wise Archbishop **Cranmer** (born 1489 - martyred 1556). He replied to the priest,

“I wonder likewise, why you attribute so little to the **diligent reading** of the **Scriptures** and **conferring of places**¹...And as touching your opinion of these questions, it seemeth to me **neither to have any ground of the word of God**², nor of the primitive church. And, to say the truth, the **schoolmen** have spoken diversely of them, and **do not agree**³ therein among themselves (Fexe, vol. 6, p. 514).

Reflect on the three thoughts of Cranmer, who was burned at the stake, for the treasures he found in the English Bible, and for the dangers he knew lay hidden in its *private* interpretation and translation.

Cranmer 1: Bible understanding and word meanings are derived from “diligent reading” and “conferring of places” **in** the English Bible.

Cranmer 2: There is *no* verse in the Bible which says, or even implies, that Bible study is to be done by ‘language scholars,’ redefining the words of the standard Bible with terms deduced from the writings of so-called ‘Christian’ and pagan philosophers. (If this were a key to Bible understanding, surely at least one verse would commend it).

Cranmer 3: The writings of these philosophers (and the variety of lexical definitions generated from their writings) do not agree with each other. Which will you choose? A tower of Babel is built as the Bible student's private interpretation is heaped upon the lexicon author's private interpretation, which had its foundation in the private interpretation of the philosopher (2 Peter 1:20).

❖ **John Philpot**, martyred in 1555, wrote to a friend,

“...of the doubtful sentences of the Scripture. Let us not go about to show in us, by following any **private man's interpretation** upon the word...” (Foxe, vol. 7, p. 707).

James Strong, author of the *Strong's Concordance*, was a liberal who was on the corrupt *American Standard Version* committee (1909). The chairman of the ASV translation, arch-liberal Phillip Schaff, is quoted saying that he selected only committee members who **denied the inspiration** of the scriptures (David Schaff, *The Life of Schaff*, NY: Scribner's Sons 1897, pp. 439, 351, 357, 434-435). Strong's Greek and Hebrew *definitions* are simply *his own* collation of *his* corrupt ASV readings, with the RSV and KJV readings. The modern versions often use the ASV word. Therefore, Strong's definitions = ASV = NIV, TNIV, NKJV, ESV, HCSB, and NASB. Such wolves were recognized in a note in the Matthew's Bible of 1549. It said,

“The open enemy is most ugly in sight,
But the wolf in the **lamb's skin** doeth all the spite...”
(Dore, 2nd ed., p.124).

❖ **Richard Wilmot** was **scourged** for his faith in 1558. He said,

“[W]e must not believe them because...they are learned, neither because our forefathers... believed as they taught...Moreover, we read, that the...**learned men** have been commonly **resisters of the truth** from time to time, and have always persecuted the prophets in the old law, as their successors did persecute our Saviour Christ...We must take heed, therefore, that we credit them no further than God will have us...” (Foxe, vol. 8, p. 518).

The Catholic inquisitors replied to him,

“Why, how knowest thou that St. Paul wrote those things that are in **English** now, it be true, whereas Paul never wrote English or Latin **?**”

The martyr, Richard Wilmot, replied,

“I am certified [certain]...” (Foxe, vol. 8, pp. 519-520).

Bible words are burned, word-by-word, with questionings echoing, “Yea, hath God said **?**” Today’s inquisitors re-echo saying, ‘How do we *know* that Paul ‘*really*’ said ‘*that*’ since he didn’t write in English?’ In jealous rage small hearts burn Paul, part-by-part, point-by-point, then page-by-page.

- ❖ Imprisoned in 1457, **Reynold Peacock** “gave little estimation...to the authority of the old doctors [Origen, Cyprian, Ireneus and others cited in modern lexicons]. He said,

“That man’s reason is not to be preferred before the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament” (Foxe, vol. 3, p. 734).

- ❖ Burned at the stake in 1555, **John Hooper** said, “[T]hey use not only false allegations of the doctors, but also a piece of the doctors against the whole course of the doctor’s mind” (Foxe, vol. 6, p. 664).
- ❖ **John Bradford** was martyred in 1555 for, among other things, challenging the ‘that-word-*actually*-means’ method of teaching. Bradford said Jesus Christ taught, “not that doctor...but me, saith Christ.” Bradford said Christ taught his followers to:

- ✓ “[F]ollow me...not that doctor...”
- ✓ “Let Christ crucified be your book to study on...”
- ✓ “His word is the lantern to lighten our steps, and not learned men...”
- ✓ “As custom causeth error and blindness, so learning, if it be not according to the light of God’s word, is poison, and learned men most pernicious” (Foxe, vol. 7, pp. 226, 251, 253).

Bradford said when he was being interrogated,

“But the true interpretation and meaning of it [holy Scriptures] they did corrupt [Jewish Pharisees], as you [today’s scholars] have done and do; and therefore the persecution which they stirred up against the prophets

and Christ, was not for the law, but for the **interpretation** of it: for they taught as you do now, that we must **fetch the interpretation of the Scriptures at your hand**. But to make an end, death I look daily for, yea hourly, and I think my time be but very short” (Foxe, vol. 7, p. 172).

A dark shadow is cast over the pews by a pulpit chained Bible and a large head, looming with lexical definitions. Such a shadow leaves listeners looking darkly at the English Bible in their laps. Dead men’s words, buried in numerous contradictory lexicons, cast questions on the *living* words of the Holy Bible. Would God hide his true words for only a select few who can afford the extra space on their computer hard drives? Small minds in big heads leave plenty of extra room for the haunting thoughts of the long dead early church writers. Would not God give the simple man the *true* Bible? God has said, “I have not spoken in secret...” (Isa. 45:10). Isaac was deceived because he was not content hearing only the words of his son. When he heard his voice, he knew the truth. But when *more* evidence was sought, he became deceived.

❖ Martyr **Roland Taylor** (c. 1555) warned that “These owls would have all day-lights” in the Bible “scraped out” and shadowed by the words from books darkened by the minds of unsaved men (Foxe, vol. 6, pp. 701, 676-703). Foxe said, “The scripture [is] falsely accused of the catholics to be obscure darkness,” but as martyr Dr. Roland Taylor said, David called it “a candle to our feet and a light to our path” (Foxe, vol. 6, p. 701). Taylor wrote of those who used Hebrew and Greek and by doing so “reproved the Scriptures as full of darkness, and yet is full of darkness himself” (Foxe, vol. 6, p. 702). Of these Taylor said,

“He might...have brought as ancient a doctor as any be **alleged out of Hebrew**...that is ‘doctor Devil’” [1 Tim. 4] (Fexe, vol. 6, p. 703).

While the critical Bishop of London complained that “every...cobbler doth read in this mother tongue” the word of God, the Bishop of Hereford admitted,

“The **lay people do now know the holy Scriptures** better than many of us...[N]ow many things may be better understood **without any glosses** at all, than by all the commentaries of the doctors” (Fexe, vol. 5, pp. 383, 382).

Some may say, ‘Yes, but these are learned men. Surely they must know what they are talking about.’ In our new dark ages many forget that God “hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes” (Matt. 11:25).

❖ **William Thorpe** (c. 1409) when imprisoned for his faith, said of the books of the wise and prudent: “[E]very book is nothing else, but diverse creatures which it is made of.” His inquisitors asked him, “From whom thinkest thou that this understanding is taken away?” Thorpe answered,

“Sir, by authority of Christ himself, the effectual **understanding** of Christ’s word **is taken away from** all them chiefly, which are great lettered men, and presume to understand high things, and will be holden **wise men**, and desire mastership and high state dignity; but they will not conform them to the living and teaching of Christ and of his apostles” (Fexe, vol. 3, pp. 274, 276).

- ❖ John Hullier was burned at the stake at Cambridge in 1556. Although well-schooled himself, he came to renounce the “schoolmen,” saying,

“Surely I judge it to be better, to go to school with our Master Christ, and to be under his ferula and rod (although it seemeth sharp and grievous for a time), that at the length we may be inheritors with him of everlasting joy, rather than to keep company with the **devil’s scholars...**” (Foxe, vol. 8, p. 132).

- ❖ **Hugh Latimer** was burned at the stake in 1555; many of his fellow martyrs were tortured on ‘the rack’ for hours and days at a time. This led Latimer to say,

“What credence is to be given to papists, it may appear by their racking, writing, wrinching, and monstrously injuring of God’s holy Scripture...” (Foxe, vol. 7, p. 423).

Tyndale vs ‘**Antichrist**’ Terms

One edition of the Great Bible (c. 1540) included in its preface a warning not to follow the “interpreting” of unsaved men for “they are the spirit of **Antichrist**” (Dore, 2nd ed., p. 177). Foxe writes of God’s “...assured and infallible word, which the adversaries have depraved and corrupted with their **false glosses**, to establish the fleshly kingdom of **antichrist**, and to purchase security in the world...” (Foxe, vol. 8, p. 201). Of those who usurp the authority of the scriptures, Foxe said,

“[B]ecause they cannot uphold their cause by plain Scripture and the word of God, they bear it out with [de]facing...”

“They charge them [Bible believers] with dissension and rebellion; and what dissension can be greater that to dissent from the Scripture and the word of God?” (Foxe, vol. 5, p. 603).

William Tyndale was credited with “Englishing the Greek New Testament” (David Daniell, *Tyndale’s New Testament*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989, p. xvii). Tyndale felt a howl rise from hell as critics began “examining that translation, and comparing it with their own...**terms**” (Foxe, vol. 5, p. 121). Tyndale replied,

“**Antichrist** hath deceived us with unknown and strange **terms** to bring us into confusion and superstitious blindness” (Foxe, vol. 5, p. 579).

Tyndale said, “twenty doctors expound one text twenty ways” (Daniell, xvi.). He *contrasted* the Bible’s built-in dictionary with the man-made ‘definitions’ used by others “whose perpetual study is to leaven the scripture with glosses” (Tyndale Bible, New Testament, Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1997, p. 2). Tyndale responds in his *Prologue* to those who think their definition and “**change** is the sense and **meaning** of those scriptures. I answer, ‘**it is sooner said than proved.**’” He said further that even *if* a definition were *a* correct *synonym*, the example of ‘correcting’ the scriptures destroys the authority of the scriptures. He writes,

“But though it were the very meaning of the scripture: yet **if it were lawful after his example to every man to play boo pepe**

with the translations that are before him, and to put out the words of the text at his pleasure and to put in every where his meaning; or what he thought the meaning were, that were the next way to stablish all heresies and to destroy the ground wherewith we should improve them [heretics]...”

“If the text be left uncorrupted, it will purge her self of all manner false glosses, how subtle soever they be feigned, as a seething pot casteth up her scum. But if the false gloss be made the text...wherewith then shall we correct false doctrine and defend Christ’s flock from false opinions, and from the wicked heresies of ravening of wolves?”

“In my mind therefore a little unfeigned **love** after the rules of Christ, is worth much high learning, and single and slight understanding that edifieth in unity, is much better than subtle curiosity, and **meekness** better than bold arrogancy and standing over much in a **man’s own conceit**...”

“I receive not in the scripture the **private interpretation of any man’s brain**...” (Tyndale Bible, New Testament, Chadwyck, pp. 10, 11).

Tyndale’s *Prologue* to Jonah said,

“[T]he fleshly-minded hypocrites stop up the veins of life, which are in the Scriptures, with the earth of **their** traditions, **false similitudes [definitions]**...” (Tyndale Bible, Jonah, *Prologue*, Chadwyck, p. 1).

Tyndale called preachers to —

“[C]reep alow by the ground...and not in the imaginations of the brain...and **not** to pronounce or **define**...things that neither help nor hinder, whether it be so or no [let the Bible define its own terms]”

“...keep you alow by the ground, avoiding high questions, that pass the common capacity. But expound the law truly, and open the veil of Moses to condemn all flesh; and prove all men sinners...and then, as a faithful minister, set abroad the mercy of our Lord Jesus, and let the wounded conscience drink of the water of him. And then shall your preaching be with power...”
(Foxe, vol. 5, p. 133).

Private Interpretation: Illegal

In some areas of Europe, which remained free from Rome’s yoke, and during some periods in England, the scripture was freely read. Imagine living where the city council discouraged the use of human definitions and explanations when expounding the Bible. Oxford professor Alister McGrath writes,

“At some point in 1520, the Zurich [Switzerland] city council required all its priests to preach according to Scripture, avoiding ‘human innovations and explanations’” (McGrath, pp. 89, 90; Walter Scott, *The Story of Our English Bible*, p. 53).

In 1523 the men of Zurich wrote an open letter. It reads, in part:

“And whereas they charge their ministers with **wresting the Scriptures after their own interpretation**, God had stirred up such light now in the hearts of men, that **the most part of their city have the Bible in their hand**, and diligently peruse the same; so that their preachers cannot so wind the Scriptures awry, but they shall quickly be perceived” (Foxe, vol. 4, p 331).

The martyr’s smoke settled for some, *for a time*, in England during the reign of Henry VIII. In 1538 the King’s representative, **Thomas Cromwell** decreed,

“That ye shall make...one sermon every quarter of a year at least, wherein ye shall purely and sincerely **declare the very gospel** of Christ...and **not** to repose their trust or affiance in **other works** devised by **men’s fantasies besides Scripture...**” (Foxe, vol. 5, p. 169).

Cromwell said the King rightly would not allow “the Scripture to be wrested and defaced by any glosses [dubious notes or definitions]” (Foxe, vol. 5, p. 379).

Around 1541 “all bishops and preachers had been ordered to preach **only** on the **pure text** of scripture, without admitting any ‘opinions of doctors,’ that is, theologians” (Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996, p. 283).

LEXICONS & ICONS: False Images of God

Such openness waxed and waned in England. The deceiver always has his own false image of Jesus Christ, the Word, and the written word. Foxe said that for many years “there was more gentleness showed to...images, than to God’s word in Henry’s time.” “The scriptures reproveth false images made of stocks and stones, and so it doth false men made of flesh and bones,” therefore it is burned word by word in lexicons (Foxe, vol. 6, pp. 28, 27).

However, during the subsequent reign of Henry’s son, King Edward, the Bible was promoted and plaster icons were purged. Foxe repeatedly commends the Reformers’ quick removal of crucifixes in obedience to the second commandment (and Heb. 6:6, Is. 47:3 and Rev. 3:18 et al.). In 1547 the Catholics protested when their icons and crucifixes were burned under Edward’s command.

“Papists can better abide the book of God’s word, than images, to be burned” (Foxe, vol. 6, p. 28).

Of the practice of burning the Bible word by word, by questioning the English translation, the Lord Protector of England wrote in 1547.

“[W]e see every day done, and sometimes commanded, because **the translator displeaseth us**; and yet herein no man exclaimeth of a terrible and detestable fact done. But let one image...be burnt...[or today, one song criticized] by and by some men are in exceeding rage...which thing hath seldom been seen done to the gospel of God, or the very true **Bible**...Nor do we now speak of false **bibles**, nor false gospel, but of the **very true** gospel, either in Latin, **Greek** [Bibles, not lexicons], **or English**...” (Foxe, vol. 6, pp. 28, 29, 28).

England's Lord Protector compared graven images with the 'false bibles' appearing in his day. Both misrepresent the truth of God. The images were not the object of false criticism; the "very true Bible," whether English, Greek, or Old Latin, was criticized. The Lord Protector said listeners are lead to *suspect* their English Bibles when a Bible teacher esteems his own private translation of the Greek Bible more highly than the 'received' English Bible.

"[I]t were more hardly done, if that you, or a few which can read in one or two languages (as **Greek** and Latin), the word of God, ...should pull away the English books from the rest which only understand English; and would have only your letters of **Greek** and Latin **in estimation**, and blind all them which understand not these languages, from the knowledge of God's word. And indeed, my lord, by your saying they have just occasion to **suspect** what is meant" (Foxye, v. 6, p. 29).

The persecution of Christians and Bibles was most severe under Catholic **Queen Mary**. When she reinstated the Catholic mass in 1553, priests presented various Greek "authorities," such as "Theodoret," "to prove that" *the Greek word* reinforced the Catholic point of view on communion (Foxye, vol. 6, pp. 404-405 et al.).

When **John Rogers**, editor of the Matthew's Bible, was burned at the stake, he said that saying the Latin mass and quoting the Greek text were forbidden by the Bible. When imprisoned and called before the Catholic judges, he said,

"'To speak with tongue,' said I, 'is to speak with a strange tongue, as Latin or **Greek**' etc., and so to speak, is **not to speak unto men...[it is] 'to speak unto the wind'**" (Foxye, vol. 6, p. 595).

His inquisitor responded, “No, no, thou canst prove nothing by the Scripture. The Scripture is dead: it must have a lively expositor.” To which Rogers replied,

“No, the Scripture is **alive**” (Foxye, vol. 6, p. 596).

Rogers added, “all heretics...were confuted by the Scriptures, and by none other expositor” (Foxye, vol. 6, p. 596). When his inquisitor charged him with pride for claiming knowledge above the ‘church fathers,’ Rogers replied that although God had used him in the preservation of his word, he claimed no erudition or eloquence.

“I also granted mine ignorance to be greater than I could express, or than he took it: but yet that I feared not, by God’s assistance and strength, to be able by writing to perform my word...but **all** was of **God**, to whom be thanks rendered therefore” (Foxye, vol. 6, p. 597).

Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) brought in a long era of freedom for the Bible. She reigned from 1558-1603. Elizabeth deposed the Catholic bishops and non-Catholics took their place. These new bishops said that,

“It is against the word of God, and the custom of the primitive church to use a **tongue unknown** to the people [Latin, Greek, Hebrew, etc]...[H]e plainly there [1 Cor. 14] speaketh not...only of preaching and prophesying...and generally of all other public actions, which require any speech in the church or congregation...[Quoting a member of the early church, the bishops add], ‘For all falsehood seeketh darkness,


and showeth false things for true. Therefore with us nothing is done privily, nothing covertly...For if there be none which can understand [Greek, Latin, Hebrew], or of whom he may be tried, he may say, there is some **deceit** and vanity...” (Foxe, vol. 8, pp. 682, 685).


To avoid today’s leaning tower of Babel and spiritual deceit, “the scriptures,” must remain the plumb line for measuring truth. The Bereans “searched the scriptures daily” to see “whether those things were so” which *men* said (Acts 17:11). They did not search *men’s* reference books [e.g. Strong’s] to see if their Bible was correct. The early heresies were generated by the *very* Greek philosophers whose writings are combed today to generate lexical definitions. It has been said, “With their tongues they torment the word of God because they can no more torture the Word of God with their hands.” Because of this, one untoward sermon in the 1520s even warned of “Greek, of which people should beware, since it was that which produced all the heresies” (J. Paterson Smyth, *How We Got Our Bible*: London, The Religious Tract Society, 1886, p. 93). Oxford History Professor Froude admits that in more conservative times (1497), there were “no grammars or dictionaries yet within reach, under much opposition and obloquy from old-fashioned **conservatism**.” Christians would “call those who study Greek heretics. The teachers of Greek...are full grown devils, and the learners of Greek are little devils...” (Froude, *The Life and Letters of Erasmus*, pp. 38, 141).


Earlier, **Tyndale** had chided a *continuing* focus on the old languages of Greek, Latin, or Hebrew saying,


“Why then should we, who walk in the broad day, not see as well as they that walked in the night, or...as well at noon as they did in the twilight” (Benson Bobrick, *Wide as the Waters*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001, p. 122).

KJV Translators: Young Eyewitness to **MARTYRS**

 What have the translators of the *Today's New International Version* (TNIV) or *Today's English Version* (TEV) watched as they were growing up — *Gilligan's Island*, *Superman*, *Hogan's Heroes* and the veiled Buddhism and Hinduism of *Star Wars*? What had the KJV translators seen? Some saw or heard about friends and neighbors being burned at the stake. Between 1553 and 1558 cruel Queen Mary killed over 300 people; 288 were burned at the stake; 112 were in the diocese of London alone.

 King James Bible translator, Lawrence Chaderton, born in 1537 in Lancashire, would have been between 16 and 21 years of age when the burning of Bibles and martyrs was a weekly occurrence.

 King James Bible translator, Thomas Holland, born in 1539 in Ludlow in Shropshire, would have been 14 to 19 years old during this holocaust.

 King James Bible translation “chief overseer,” Richard Bancroft, born in 1544, was 9 to 14 years of age when the fires burned in many public squares.

They saw their peers burned at the stake while debating the translation of **one word** of the Bible. Teenager William Hunter was only 19 years old when he was burned alive in 1555. Going to the stake, he “read the fifty-first Psalm, till he came to these words, ‘The sacrifice of God is a **contrite** spirit; a contrite and a broken heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.’ Then said master Tyrill...” —

The inquisitor: “Thou liest...thou readest false; for the words are an *humble* spirit.”


William Hunter: “The translation saith, a **contrite** heart.”


The inquisitor: “Yea, quoth master Tyrill, the translation is false: ye translate books as ye list yourselves, like heretics...”


“Then William rose and went to the stake, and stood upright to it...Immediately fire was made...And William answered, ‘I am not afraid...Lord, Lord, Lord, receive my spirit;’ and casting down his head again into the smothering smoke, he yielded up his life for truth, sealing it with his blood to the praise of God” (Fuxe, vol. 6, pp. 728, 729 et al.).

The Bible read by the martyr used the word “contrite,” just as today’s KJV does. The word ‘contrite’ implies the acknowledgement of sin. The word ‘humble’ does not mean ‘sorry,’ ‘sad’ or ‘repentant,’ while the word ‘contrite’ does. Today’s corrupt *Good News For Modern Man* says “humble,” chanting with the Catholic *New American Bible* which says “humbled heart” (v. 19).

The KJV translators, as small children, could have seen their friend’s parents go to the stake. Children were sometimes forced to watch their own parents burn or to set them on fire themselves (Fuxe, vol. 5, p. 649; vol. 3, p. 245).

 King James translator, Henry Savile, was born in 1549 at Bradley in Yorkshire; he would have watched men and women burn at the stake for 5 long years, between the ages of 4 and 9.

 King James translator John Reynolds was born in Devonshire in 1549; he too would have seen saints burn for half of his young life, from age 4 to age 9.

 Another King James translator at an impressionable age was Giles Tomson, born in 1553. He would have

been 5 years old during the last years when men, women, children and Bibles were burned; he lived in London where these were frequent occurrences.

👁️ Miles Smith was born in 1554 at Hereford, a region where Christians suffered much persecution. The re-told stories of the burnings would have filled his childhood, since they had only ceased when he was 5 years old.

👁️ Lancelot Andrews, the paramount King James translator, would have been a toddler of age 3, perched on his mother's knee during the London burnings.

👁️ King James translator Richard Eeded, born at Sewell in 1555 and a native of Bedfordshire, along with translator, Thomas Bilson, would never forget the stories of horror and heroism heard by every child of that day.

👁️ King James translator George Abbot's own parents had been "sufferers for the truth in the times of popish cruelty."

👁️ Hadrian Saravia was born in 1530 in Hedin in Artois (once Northern France). He was a teen when the Inquisition was killing Christians on the continent and Henry VIII was burning them in England. During his twenties he saw the torch carried again by Bloody Mary. (See Gustavus S. Paine, *The Men Behind the King James Bible*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1959, pp. 16, 17 et al.; Alexander McClure, *Translators Revived*, Mobile, Alabama: RE Publications, 1858 edition).

Dying to Defend The Bible's Dictionary

The KJV translators, no doubt, had heroes, much as today's children do. Cast over their era was the tall shadow of one such man, Johannes de Wesalia (c. 1479). He believed the Bible gave its own *authoritative* definitions of words; consequently, lexical definitions were not to be believed. He was “persecuted nearly to death” and his “articles were condemned by the inquisitor.” He said,

“That we should only believe the word of God, and not the gloss [word meaning] of any man, or father.”

“That the word of God is to be expounded with the collation of **one place with another**” (Fexe, vol. 3, pp. 779, 775, 776).

How is the Bible understood? The Holy Ghost teaches it by “comparing spiritual things with spiritual” — “one place with another.” He does not use the “words which man’s wisdom teacheth” (i.e. lexicons by liberals).

“Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the **Holy Ghost teacheth**; comparing spiritual things with spiritual”
1 Cor.
2:13.